

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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Applicant's or agent's file reference FP20898	FOR FURTHER ACTION		See Form PCT/IPEA/416
International application No. PCT/AU2004/001831	International filing date (day/month/year) 23 December 2004	Priority date (day/month/year) 23 December 2003	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC Int. Cl. G06Q 30/00 (2006.01)			
Applicant AUCTION HOUSE AUSTRALIA PTY LTD et al			

- This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
- This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.
- This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:
 - ☒ (sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau) a total of 8 sheets, as follows:
 - ☒ sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).
 - ☐ sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.
 - ☐ (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) , containing a sequence listing and/or table related thereto, in electronic form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).
- This report contains indications relating to the following items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I	Basis of the report
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II	Priority
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV	Lack of unity of invention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI	Certain documents cited
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII	Certain defects in the international application
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 24 October 2005	Date of completion of this report 28 March 2006
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaustalia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized Officer S KAUL Telephone No. (02) 6283 2182

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the language, this report is based on:

- ☒ The international application in the language in which it was filed
- ☐ A translation of the international application into _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
- ☐ international search (under Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1 (b))
- ☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4(a))
- ☐ international preliminary examination (Rules 55.2(a) and/or 55.3(a))

2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on *(replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report)*:

- ☐ the international application as originally filed/furnished
- ☒ the description:
pages **1, 4, 6 - 18** as originally filed/furnished
pages* **2, 3, 5** received by this Authority on **24 October 2005** with the letter of **24 October 2005**
pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of
- ☒ the claims:
pages as originally filed/furnished
pages* as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19
pages* **19 - 23** received by this Authority on **24 October 2005** with the letter of **24 October 2005**
pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of
- ☒ the drawings:
pages **1-5** as originally filed/furnished
pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of
pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of
- ☐ a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.

3. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages
- ☐ the claims, Nos.
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
- ☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (*specify*):

4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

- ☐ the description, pages
- ☐ the claims, Nos.
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
- ☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (*specify*):

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	YES
	Claims 1 - 26	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	YES
	Claims 1 - 26	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1 - 26	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

D1: US 2003/0195839 A

D2: WO 2003/038723 A

D3: WO 2002/103477 A

D4: US 2002/0123959 A

D5: US 2002/0062276 A

D6: CA 2282173 A

D7: WO 2000/034899 A

Novelty and Inventive Step – Claims 1 to 26

The invention defined by all claims lacks novelty and inventiveness in light of D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6 and D7, each of which discloses all of the essential features of the invention. Any differences between the claims and the citations are inessential features and/or elements of the common general knowledge in the art.

The amendments introduce the feature of creating a record of the communication between the prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale into the claims. These citations all disclose online auctioning systems where bids are sent from a prospective purchaser to an auctioneer. These bids (ie communications) must in all cases be stored for the auctioning systems to work.

For example

D1 See Figure 5, item 240 and associated description

D2 See Pages 5 and 6 with regard to the description of Figure 3.

D3 See figure 1, item 22, auction database

D4 See Figure 1B, item 33.

D5 See paragraph [0058]

D6 See Figure 3, item 52

D7 See Figure 3 item 307

Claims 1 to 26 are not novel and do not involve an inventive step.

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transaction, the system comprising:

obtaining means operable to obtain information
pertaining to an object that is for sale;

forwarding means operable to forward the information
5 pertaining to the object to a first computing device that
is arranged to present the information to a prospective
purchaser; and

establishing means operable to establish a
communicating means associated with the first computing
10 device and a second computing device that is used by a
person managing a sale of the object, the communicating
means being such that it allows the prospective purchaser
and the person managing the sale to use the first computing
device and the second computing device, respectively, to
15 communicate with each other in relation to the sale of the
object, the communicating means also being arranged to
create a record of communication between the prospective
purchaser and the person managing the sale.

20 Thus, in the case where the sale of the object is
being conducted by auction the present invention provides
the advantages of allowing the person managing the sale of
the object (for example, an auctioneer) to accept bids for
the object from parties who are unable to attend a venue at
25 which the auction is being held. Furthermore, the present
invention allows the person managing the sale to interact
with the parties unable to attend the venue, thereby
allowing the person managing the sale to control the
progress of the auction.

30 Preferably, the communicating means is operable to
assist the person managing the sale to conduct the sale in
accordance with an auction process or a tender process.

35 Thus, providing the person with assistance in
managing the sale provides the advantage of allowing the
person managing the sale to focus on interacting with the

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crowd. By way of example, the communicating means provides assistance by automatically presenting the prospective purchaser with information that indicates when the tender process is due to close.

5

Preferable, the tender process comprises a closed tender process or an open tender process.

10 As persons skilled in the art will readily appreciate, a closed tender process is one in which persons are unable to view submitted tenders until the deadline for submitting offers has passed. In contrast to a closed tender, an open tender is such that tender submission are open for viewing before the deadline for submitting offers
15 has passed.

Preferably, the communicating means is operable to restrict an ability of the prospective purchaser to communicate with the person managing the sale based on
20 whether the prospective person is registered to participate in the sale of the object.

Thus, being able to restrict the ability of the prospective purchaser to communicate with the person
25 managing the sale provides the advantage of minimising the likelihood of 'dummy' offers to purchase the object being made.

Thus, the record provides the advantage of allowing
30 the communication between the prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale to be analysed.

Preferably, the communicating means is operable to allow a party to use a third computing device to access and
35 edit the information pertaining to the sale.

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Preferably, the object comprises real estate.

According to a second aspect of the present invention
5 there is provided a method for facilitating a transaction,
the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining information pertaining to an object that is
for sale;

forwarding the information pertaining to the object
10 to a first computing device that is arranged to present the
information to a prospective purchaser; and

establishing a communicating means associated with
the first computing device and a second computing device
that is used by a person managing a sale of the object, the
15 communicating means being such that it allows the
prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale to
use the first computing device and the second computing
device, respectively, to communicate with each other in
relation to the sale of the object, the communicating means
20 also being arranged to create a record of communication
between the prospective purchaser and the person managing
the sale.

Preferably, the communicating means is operable to
25 assist the person managing the sale to conduct the sale in
accordance with an auction process or a tender process.

Preferable, the tender process comprises a closed
tender process or an open tender process.
30

Preferably, the communicating means is operable to
restrict an ability of the prospective purchaser to
communicate with the person managing the sale based on
whether the prospective person is registered to participate
35 in the sale of the object.

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CLAIMS:

1. A system for facilitating a transaction, the system comprising:

5 obtaining means operable to obtain information pertaining to an object that is for sale;

forwarding means operable to forward the information pertaining to the object to a first computing device that is arranged to present the information to a prospective purchaser; and

10 establishing means operable to establish a communicating means associated with the first computing device and a second computing device that is used by a person managing a sale of the object, the communicating means being such that it allows the prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale to use the first computing device and the second computing device, respectively, to communicate with each other in relation to the sale of the object, the communicating means also being arranged to

15 create a record of communication between the prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale.

2. The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the communicating means is operable to assist the person

25 managing the sale to conduct the sale in accordance with an auction process or a tender process.

3. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the tender process comprises a closed tender process or an open

30 tender process.

4. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the communicating means is operable to restrict an ability of the prospective purchaser to communicate with

35 the person managing the sale based on whether the prospective person is registered to participate in the sale of the object.

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5 5. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
4, wherein the communicating means is operable to allow a
party to use a third computing device to access and edit
the information pertaining to the sale.

10 6. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
5, wherein the obtaining means is operable to obtain the
information pertaining to the object from a computer system
via a first communication network.

15 7. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
6, wherein the obtaining means is operable to determine
whether it is authorised to receive the information
pertaining to the object.

20 8. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
7, wherein the forwarding means is operable to use a second
communication network in order to forward the information
pertaining to the object to the first computing device.

25 9. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
8, wherein the obtaining means is operable to obtain
additional information associated with an agency engaged by
an owner of the object to oversee the sale of the object,
whilst the forwarding means is operable to forward the
additional information to the first computing device which
is arranged to present the additional information to the
prospective purchaser.

30 10. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
9, wherein the information pertaining to the sale
comprises: an image of the object; details of the sale;
and/or a contract for the sale of the object.

35 11. The system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
10, wherein the object comprises real estate.

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12. A method for facilitating a transaction, the method comprising the steps of:

5 obtaining information pertaining to an object that is for sale;

forwarding the information pertaining to the object to a first computing device that is arranged to present the information to a prospective purchaser; and

10 establishing a communicating means associated with the first computing device and a second computing device that is used by a person managing a sale of the object, the communicating means being such that it allows the prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale to use the first computing device and the second computing
15 device, respectively, to communicate with each other in relation to the sale of the object, the communicating means also being arranged to create a record of communication between the prospective purchaser and the person managing the sale.

20

13. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the communicating means is operable to assist the person managing the sale to conduct the sale in accordance with an auction process or a tender process.

25

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the tender process comprises a closed tender process or an open tender process.

30

15. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 14, wherein the communicating means is operable to restrict an ability of the prospective purchaser to communicate with the person managing the sale based on whether the prospective person is registered to participate in the sale
35 of the object.

16. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to

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15, wherein the communicating means is operable to allow a party to use a third computing device to access and edit the information pertaining to the object.

5 17. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 16, wherein the step of obtaining the information pertaining to the object comprises obtaining the information from a computer system via a communication network.

10 18. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 17, wherein the step of obtaining the information pertaining to the object comprises determining whether the information pertaining to the object is authorised to be
15 obtained.

 19. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 18, wherein the step of forwarding the information comprises using a communication network in order to forward
20 the information pertaining to the sale to the first computing device.

 20. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 19, wherein the method further comprises the step of
25 obtaining additional information associated with an agency engaged by an owner of the object to oversee the sale of the object, whilst the step of forwarding the information comprises forwarding the additional information to the first computing device which is arranged to present the
30 additional information to the prospective purchaser.

 21. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 20, wherein the information pertaining to the sale comprises: an image of the object; details of the sale;
35 and/or a contract for the sale of the object.

 22. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 to

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21, wherein the object comprises real estate.

23. A computer program that comprises at least one
instruction for causing a computing device to carry out the
5 method as claimed in any one of claims 12 to 22.

24. A computer readable medium comprising the
computer program claimed in claim 23.

10 25. The system as claimed in claim 1 and
substantially as herein described with reference to the
accompanying figures.

15 26. The method as claimed in claim 12 and
substantially as herein described with reference to the
accompanying figures.